

**Senate Committee**

**Education, Energy and the Environment**

**Written Testimony for SB 180:**

**“Public and Nonpublic Schools – Bronchodilator Availability and Use – Policy  
(Bronchodilator Rescue Inhaler Law).”**

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony. My name is Irada Waldron, and I work as a school nurse in the Howard County Public School System. I have been working as a school nurse in Howard County since 2018.

In my experience, asthma-related health concerns are among the most common reasons for students' visits to the health room. Asthma is a chronic health condition with frequent flare-ups throughout the school year due to weather conditions, physical activity, air pollution, and airway infections. Students often present to the health room for assistance when symptoms progress to a compromised airway that needs urgent medical attention. Immediate access to bronchodilator medication is crucial to open the airway and improve air circulation. When inhaled rescue medication is not available in the health room, asthma student has an increased risk of life-threatening complications, hospital admissions, and school absences.

Today's healthcare system is complex, and many parents face barriers to accessing needed medications for their children. Often, parents have busy schedules due to working multiple jobs, not having access to transportation regularly, or facing financial hardships, which place challenges in getting access to additional inhaler medication for the school. I have seen many students with asthma diagnoses whose parents do not bring additional inhaler medication to the health room due to the reasons stated above.

As a school nurse, I aim to ensure that each student has access to education and participates in all school activities. Students with an asthma diagnosis and their families often face disruption in their daily lives due to asthma flare-up management. Also, the students with asthma diagnosis have increased school absences. Having access to rescue inhaler medication in each school will save students' lives and will reduce the risk of life-threatening complications due to asthma attacks.

Today, we acknowledge the importance of having Epinephrine injections and Narcan medications in every school to prevent deaths from anaphylaxis and opioid overdose. Providing rescue bronchodilator inhalers in each school will prevent life-threatening asthma complications for students and staff members. It is important to remember that asthma is a chronic health condition when serious flare-ups can happen unexpectedly and require immediate bronchodilator medication administration. I wrote my testimony in favor of SB 180. We can ensure that students and staff diagnosed with asthma remain safe in school by providing rescue bronchodilators in every school for emergencies!